Hampshire Hospitals works with CliniSys to send negative Covid-19 test results to staff by Short Message Service (SMS)

New functionality in the CliniSys Integrated Clinical Environment (ICE) application is now available to report tests quickly and efficiently as labs build up testing capability

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (HHFT) is sending text messages to staff who have been tested for Covid-19 and whose tests have come back negative.

The move is thanks to a rapid piece of development work by CliniSys, in collaboration with Shaun Goldsmith, a results system specialist at HHFT. CliniSys has created new functionality in its order communications and results reporting system, ICE, to send a standard text message through the trust's telecommunications system.

This will save the trust many hours that would otherwise have been spent on administration and telephone calls. It will also get negative results to staff faster, so they can return to work, leave temporary accommodation, or tell their families they can leave self-isolation if they are symptom-free.

Shaun Goldsmith, ICE and microbiology system manager at the trust, explained: "Our ambition is to run 1,000 Covid-19 tests a day, so we needed an automated or near-automated way to get the negative results to staff.

"Using ICE to generate text messages will speed up the process and avoid lots and lots of telephone calls. It will also enable the trust to focus on calling those people who do test positive, who will need support and advice."

CliniSys has developed completely new functionality in ICE to meet the trust's request and is now offering this to NHS organisations that would like to take a similar approach.

Sending negative results by text message could also support labs as they move from testing NHS staff to key workers and the general population.

Professor Antony Costello, Director of the UCL Institute for Global Health, recently told the Commons health and social care committee that testing, contact tracing and isolating will be vital to avoid coronavirus spikes as "stay at home" restrictions are eased, and this will not only mean testing people in the community but "making sure the results get back to them very quickly."

Andrew Pickering, account manager at CliniSys, said: "Hampshire Hospitals came to us with a problem and we were able to develop a solution within three weeks.

"We have already seen interest from other ICE customers in this functionality, and there is real potential for it to support the roll-out of mass testing, as promised by the government. There is also the potential for labs to use SMS to streamline results reporting in the future."

The Hampshire functionality means that if the report is for a Covid-19 test, and the result is negative and needs to go to a specific patient type, such as a member of trust staff for whom a mobile phone number is recorded, ICE generates a message that can be sent out by SMS.

The CliniSys solution does offer flexibility however, and can be configured for different tests or different results.

CliniSys has drawn up supporting documentation and sample forms for trusts, so they can rapidly implement the functionality, working with their existing telecoms systems.

About: CliniSys Group

For over 30 years CliniSys Group has been at the forefront of diagnostics workflow, order communications and information management solutions supporting radiology, cardiology and all pathology disciplines including anatomical or cellular, molecular and genetics. These encompass the complete workflow from order, clinical decision support, collection, processing, analysis, results and reporting, through integration into the clinical workflow. CliniSys Group has built an unrivalled reputation for the deployment of complex diagnostics networks and academic centres – and is the only vendor repeatably delivering across all disciplines end to end – at scale.

CliniSys Group solutions have been deployed in 10 languages in thousands of laboratories across 23 countries and are used by hundreds of thousands of healthcare professionals. Headquartered in the UK, CliniSys Group employs through CliniSys (UK) and MIPS (Europe), close to 500 dedicated diagnostics IT professionals.

CliniSys provides market leading solutions across the UK and Ireland.

- Its laboratory information management system, WinPath, is deployed in nearly 50% of all NHS trusts and now supports 34 pathology networks across the UK.
- Tests for more than 40 million patients are processed on its order communications system, ICE every year, whilst more than one third of NHS acute trusts use ICE for test ordering by hospital wards, and over 70% of the same trusts use ICE for GP order comms.

MIPS provides market leading solutions across Europe.

- Its laboratory information management systems, GLIMS, DaVinci, GestLab, and MIPS vianova Labor support thousands of laboratories, including many of the largest laboratory networks across Europe.
- Its order communications systems CyberLab, and iGestlab, are now also increasingly used by patients to access their own and their family's test results.